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 SHORT COMMUNICATION

***Lasius brunneus* (Latreille) (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) in Monmouthshire.** – Workers of the Nationally Scarce brown tree ant *Lasius brunneus* were found on an ancient oak tree within the former deer park of Llantilio Crossenny (SO412141), 12.vi.2005, during a visit by members of the Ancient Tree Forum (ATF). The species has only recently been detected in this part of Wales but this is a very under-recorded area and the ant may well have been present for some time. The earlier records have not been formally published. Peter Hammond noted its presence in Wyelands Park, Chepstow (ST522918), 13.viii.1994, during specialist survey of old parklands for the Countryside Council for Wales; A.P. Fowles subsequently found it to be widespread there, 7.vi.1999. P. Skidmore found it deeper into Wales in Clytha Park, west of Raglan (SO3608) during 2002, and A.O. Chater identified it from Dingestow Court Park (SO452097), 10.iv.2004. These sites appear consistent with the ant's known distribution through the lower Severn catchment (Alexander & Taylor, 1997) and all lie between the Rivers Wye and Usk. It is unclear whether the species is a long-overlooked resident or has undergone a recent range expansion westwards.

Thanks to David Parsons for suggesting the Ancient Tree Forum visit this gigantic tree, to Adrian Fowles for permission to refer to the unpublished CCW records, and to Glenda Orledge for details of the Dingestow record. – KEITH N. A. ALEXANDER, 59 Sweetbrier Lane, Heavitree, Exeter EX1 3AQ

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